

COMMON GROUND



THE COUNCIL OF CHRISTIANS AND JEWS

PATRON — HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN

Objects :

To combat all forms of religious and racial intolerance. To promote mutual understanding and goodwill between Christians and Jews, and to foster co-operation in educational activities and in social and community service.

Presidents :

HIS GRACE THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY
HIS EMINENCE THE CARDINAL ARCHBISHOP OF WESTMINSTER
THE RT. REV. THE MODERATOR OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND
THE RT. REV. THE MODERATOR OF THE FREE CHURCH
FEDERAL COUNCIL
THE VERY REV. THE CHIEF RABBI

Vice-Presidents :

THE RT. HON. LORD COHEN
SIR RICHARD LIVINGSTONE

Hon. Treasurer :

EDMUND DE ROTHSCHILD, T.D.

Joint Hon. Secretaries :

PERCY W. BARTLETT
A. G. BROTMAN, B.Sc.

Chairman of Executive Committee :

REV. CANON CHARLES E. RAVEN, D.D., D.Sc.

General Secretary :

REV. W. W. SIMPSON, M.A.

Organising Secretary :

D. WALLACE BELL

Education Officer :

A. J. POLACK, M.A.

Local Councils :

Birmingham, Brighton, Bristol, Cambridge, Cardiff, Chester,
Hampstead, Hull, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester,
Middlesbrough, Oxford, Southport, South Shields,
Sunderland, Willesden.

KINGSWAY CHAMBERS, 162A, STRAND, LONDON, W.C.2

Telephone : TEMPLE BAR 9306-7-8

COMMON GROUND

NOVEMBER - DECEMBER, 1952

VOLUME VI NUMBER 6

PRICE : SIXPENCE

The Council of Christians and Jews
is proud to announce that
HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN
has been graciously pleased
to grant her Patronage to the Council.

MAIN CONTENTS

Against Intolerance

"The Council of Christians and Jews" The Home Secretary, the Rt. Hon. Sir David Maxwell Fyfe, Q.C., M.P. and His Grace the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury.

An Impression of the Council's Tenth Anniversary Dinner

The Feast of Chanukkah - - - - - The Very Rev. the Haham
Christmas All the Year Round - - - The Rt. Rev. the Bishop of Stepney

Against Intolerance

Under this title "The Times" published a leading article which we reproduce below, on Wednesday, October 8th, 1952, on the morning of the Council's Tenth Anniversary Dinner at the Mansion House. Elsewhere in this issue of "Common Ground" we report some of the speeches made at the Dinner, and we attempt to give our readers some impression of an occasion which was a notable tribute to the importance of the Council's work.

THE Council of Christians and Jews was founded in March, 1942, and its members dine together to-night in celebration of ten years' work for the betterment of human understanding. The Council was

born of the horror that filled all Christendom at the news of the ghastly massacres of Jews in Nazi Germany; but with the horror was blended remorse for many centuries of mutual intolerance between Jews and Christians, which dishonoured the highest ideals of both religions and stored up the fuel that fed the ultimate appalling explosion. The first steps to bring together an association of men of constructive charity, in order to exorcize the evil spirit of persecution, were taken in collaboration by ARCHBISHOP TEMPLE and DR. HERTZ, the Chief Rabbi. CARDINAL HINSLEY, who had lately founded his organization, the Sword of the Spirit, to enable those of his own faith to cooperate with other Christians against the forces of irreligion, promptly adhered to the movement, which was equally strongly supported by the Free Churches, with the late HENRY CARTER as their leading representative.

It was never the intention that the fundamental differences between these various religious bodies would be blurred; "The effectiveness of any religious belief," wrote TEMPLE, "depends upon its definiteness." But the uprising of the new paganism revealed in a bright light that there were certain great principles which all Christians and all Jews held in common against it. One of these was a belief in the brotherhood of men, and an unshakable conviction that such brotherhood has no meaning except as a consequence of their being sons of one Father, who is in heaven. On that ground the duty of mutual tolerance in the midst of all differences of creed became a sacred obligation of both faiths.

For this principle above all the Council of Christians and Jews has contended with all its resources of persuasion and instruction through the ten years of its life. Its work has long since transcended the limits of the particular animosities that have so long divided Christians and Jews. The spirit of intolerance thrives like a weed in any soil; antagonism between races or colours, for instance, is fundamentally of the same species and needs to be combated by the same spirit of reason and forbearance. In a still wider sense the forces tending to dragoon minds into the passive acceptance of orthodoxy grow daily stronger in the modern world, and that not only in countries politically controlled by authoritarian régimes. "Mass action," writes the present PRIMATE of ALL ENGLAND to the Council's periodical *Common Ground*, "means strong discipline, so that everybody shall toe one line and speak one voice. The only certainty is that, when men speak with one voice, that voice is wrong." In resisting every form of compelled unanimity the Council of Christians and Jews is upholding the dignity of the individual man as a spiritual being.

This article is reproduced by courtesy of "The Times."

"The Council of Christians and Jews"



THE RIGHT HON.

SIR DAVID MAXWELL

FYFE, Q.C., M.P.

IT is natural for all of us on anniversary occasions to look to the past. On this occasion it is not only natural but important that we should do so, because of the interesting and significant work which has been done by the Council of Christians and Jews during its first ten years. At the end of these ten years we realise, I think, that this work is something that we, as a nation of individuals, can neglect only at our peril.

It is almost unnecessary to remind this gathering of the situation ten years ago. The war in Africa was reaching a critical stage. In Europe the Nazi persecution of the Jewish people had become intensified. In this country, in our anxieties and uncertainties, co-operation between Jews and Christians was to be found, first in the care of refugees, and secondly in recognition of the seriousness of the intensification of propaganda and feeling of antisemitism as a phenomenon of world history. It was natural at such a time for Christians and Jews to be drawn together, for they recognised in this phenomenon a danger, not only to its immediate victims, but to the community as a whole. They recognised, too, the need for co-operation in combating the evil as it arose. As we look back today we can see that even antisemitism was not the ultimate evil, but only a symptom of the deep-rooted disorders of our day.

It is not my intention tonight to occupy your time with philosophic analysis of these disorders. But this surely is true, that with the passing of the nineteenth century dream of an imminent Golden Age, there has been throughout the world a growing recognition of the complexity of life, and at the same time a growing desire for simple explanations and short-term solutions of fundamental problems. It was in these circumstances

that men who only a few years before had proudly proclaimed themselves the masters of their fate and the captains of their souls, began to plead that they were after all only the creatures of environment and of economic laws. From this it was an easy step to the further plea that they were the victims of racial superiority or inferiority.

Need for a spiritual answer

From such over-simplifications of fundamental human problems certain inevitable consequences followed—revolution, often with racial segregation as a corollary, and the totalitarian state with its concentration and extermination camps. The end was confusion and disaster in situations in which human values were rapidly losing their significance. Mankind forgot that the only answer that we can make to the challenge of our time must be a spiritual answer; and that the alternative is no answer at all but merely a squalid acquiescence with the physical necessities of our time.

These are still major problems for mankind. They still call for a variety of activities if we are going to reach towards their solution. Governmental and inter-Governmental action may have some effect to counteract these tendencies: social and economic security, the safeguarding of human rights, control of atomic energy in dealing with the threats to international order—these are all of great importance. I do not grudge a minute of the years I spent in trying to secure, and ultimately securing, a convention of human rights for the nations of Europe.

But there are limits to what a Government can do. We come again to the necessity for the acceptance by everyone of the fundamental dignity of the human spirit and the individual soul; and I am glad to think that, save in certain totalitarian states, Governments welcome the efforts of voluntary associations to try and solve these problems of our time.

It is for this reason that the work of the Council is so significant: first and foremost because it is a Council of Christians and Jews—men and women who recognise and respect the differences of religious faith between them and who, despite these differences, share certain fundamental concepts of the nature of God and man, and believe that these concepts are of importance to society and human relations.

Barbarism beneath our feet

I make no apology for reminding everyone in this room of the tragic history of Jewish-Christian relations. It is still inexplicable to me, looking back over these years, how 800,000 copies of *Der Stuermer* could ever have been sold. But the fact is that Streicher sold them. I can hardly

believe that I, myself, have seen a polished civil servant of the *Reichsicherheitshauptamt* tell with laborious exactitude how he had personally supervised the killing in cold blood of 95,000 Jewish men, women and children. But I did hear him. We must face the eternal verity that barbarism is never centuries behind us. It is always underneath our feet.

These are the dangers which this Council was erected to meet and towards the elimination of which it has done such mighty work. There are limitations to its powers, and tonight's gathering has, as one purpose, their removal through the help that people here can give. But we want to see all its activities—educational and every other—not only continued but increased and expanded as the years go on.

Prime Minister's message

I said that most Governments, except in a few totalitarian states, welcomed the work of voluntary associations on these lines. I need hardly say that Her Majesty's Government is first and foremost in such work, and my leader, the Prime Minister, has asked me to give this message to you tonight: "I congratulate the Council on the Tenth Anniversary of their formation, and on the way they have fostered understanding and goodwill between the two Religions."



HIS GRACE

THE LORD ARCHBISHOP

OF CANTERBURY

WE are all extremely grateful to the Home Secretary for what he has said of the work of the Council of Christians and Jews: of the historic circumstances in which it was brought to birth—tragic, moving, almost desperate—and of the general spiritual setting in which the work

now has to be done. He has reminded us that this is a problem, not of ten years ago, but of now, and, one might almost say, of centuries yet to come.

We have all read the very fine leading article in *The Times* on the Council of Christians and Jews. The article is headed "Against Intolerance," and that of course is true. But I should myself rather head it "Towards Tolerance." For we are not merely resisting all the evils of antisemitism and their like; we are positively striving for that kind of tolerance which overcomes evils that exist between religions and races. I say "between religions," for we cannot ever forget how liable mankind is to fierce religious controversies and cruelties. The Jews will never forget that. The Christians are never likely to forget what religious intolerance between Jew and Christian has done in the past. Wherever a religion aggressively and violently wages war against another, it is bad.

Unity underlies differences

We seek to demonstrate the better way, in our society, of maintaining that deep religious unity which underlies all the differences between Christian or Jew or any other religion, for it is of the very essence of religion that we look to one God and Father who desires and works for unity between all His children. We, as Jews and Christians, stand on the common ground of belief in a God whose very nature is justice and mercy and loving kindness, and that is why we seek to abolish every kind of religious intolerance.

In these days, however, it is chiefly against the intolerance between races that we have to strive; for that kind of intolerance goes desperately deep in all parts of the world. The tension between Jew and non-Jew is only one example of it. At this very moment European and African relations are causing grievous tensions in many parts of Africa. Our great sister-nation and ally has not yet solved the problem of American White and Negro, and at any moment in almost every country this inter-racial tension is liable to flare up and to break out into rivalries and fears. But it passes at once into irrational repulsions which become instinctive, uncontrolled and almost uncontrollable.

Apartheid is no remedy

This age has seen the invention of a new word, *apartheid*. I am not speaking or referring to the country from which the term comes. I am using it to remind you that the meaning of the word, "separateness," is by no means confined to South Africa. It has spread into many other parts of the world too, in the doctrine that the right way to deal with the various

groups of mankind is to keep them apart from one another. You separate fighting dogs. That is the only thing you can do about them. And if men choose to fight like animals then *apartheid* is the only policy. But it is not a human remedy adequate to the dangers, and certainly not a Divine remedy, and that means it is no remedy at all.

We seek a better way which triumphs over the divisions between races and classes and groups, rising above them into an atmosphere in which there can be toleration, not as a mere negative attitude, but as a positive exertion of the sense of human brotherhood and of our bounden duty to find agreement by understanding one another and feeling for one another. That is what this Council exists to do. I think that in these years we have done not a little to bear our witness to this spirit of unity and tolerance within our own ranks and outside, in this country and in collaboration with others in other countries.

Golden thread of tolerance and understanding

Can I sum up all that I want to say in the words of His late Majesty, King George VI, in his last Christmas broadcast. "I think," he said, "that among all the blessings we may count today, the chief one is that we are a friendly people. We do not all think alike, of course. We are such a large family of nations that this would be difficult. We each have our own ideas, but we have come to learn that differences of opinion are not the same as quarrels. I wonder if we realise just how precious this spirit of friendliness and kindness is. We are living in an age which is often hard and cruel, and if there is anything that we can offer to the world today perhaps it is the example of tolerance and understanding that runs like a golden thread through the great and diverse family, the British Commonwealth of Nations."

It is the same golden thread that has run through the history of the first ten years of the life of this Council. I hope the Council will ever continue to carry on this magnificent cause.

ONE GOD—The Ways He is Worshipped and Served

*A series of four film-strips showing the way
in which God is worshipped and served in the
Anglican, Roman Catholic and Free Churches,
and in the Synagogue.*

**Price for complete set, including full lecture notes: 24s. 0d.
(Postage and packing 6d.)**

**THE COUNCIL OF CHRISTIANS AND JEWS
162a Strand, London, W.C.2.**

An Impression

MORE than 350 guests were present at the Council's Tenth Anniversary Dinner at the Mansion House on October 8th. Although the Mansion House is the home of the Lord Mayor of London during his term of office, and it was by his courtesy that the Dinner was held, the host was the Council of Christians and Jews, and so the guests were received by the Archbishop of Canterbury and Mrs. Fisher, the Chief Rabbi and Mrs. Brodie. The Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress were themselves the chief guests.

Sitting beside them at the top table were many other distinguished men and women from all sections of the community, including the Home Secretary, the Chairman of the L.C.C., Viscount Samuel and Viscount Waverley, with the two Sheriffs, in their picturesque dress, one at either end of the table.

Grace before dinner was said, in Hebrew and in English, by the Rev. I. Levy, Senior Jewish Chaplain to H.M. Forces, and grace at the end of dinner by the Rev. W. W. Simpson. Then came the speeches—the first, proposing the traditional toast of “the Lord Mayor, the Sheriffs and the Corporation of the City of London,” by Mr. Douglas Woodruff, editor of the *Tablet*.

The City's traditions of tolerance

In a witty and graceful speech, Mr. Woodruff recalled the contribution which the City of London had made to the welfare of mankind, through its business enterprise in developing backward countries, through its insistence on good government, and through its tolerance. There was, he felt, no more suitable place in the whole of the British Isles for the Council of Christians and Jews to celebrate its tenth anniversary, than the Mansion House in the City of London.

The Lord Mayor, responding to the toast, expressed his and the Lady Mayoress's pleasure at being able to lend the Mansion House for the celebration of the Council's tenth anniversary. He spoke of the stand for liberty which the City of London had taken on innumerable occasions. As long ago as the days of William the Conqueror, the Sheriffs, who governed London (their office existed even in Saxon times), had insisted that before William entered the City of London he should undertake to confirm all their rights and undoubted privileges—thus establishing the first principle of banking, “no advance without security.”



SOME OF THE SPEAKERS AT THE DINNER

The Home Secretary, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lord Mayor, the Chief Rabbi, and Viscount Waverley.

In comparatively more recent times the City had insisted on returning Lionel de Rothschild time and again to Parliament when Parliament would not admit him, until eventually the intolerance of Parliament was broken down and Jews were admitted as Members.

" The Council "

The toast of the Council of Christians and Jews was then proposed by the Home Secretary, Sir David Maxwell Fyfe, Q.C., M.P., whose speech is reported at length in the earlier pages of this issue of *Common Ground*. He coupled with the toast the names of all the Joint Presidents of the Council—the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Chief Rabbi, who were present, and Cardinal Griffin, the Moderator of the Church of Scotland, and the Moderator of the Free Church Federal Council, who had been prevented from coming. It was, he said, a delight to be able, in one

breath, to mention these names of high dignitaries as engaged in this work. He asked the guests to remember what the Council had achieved, and to drink to its continuing success, and in drinking to pledge their sympathy and future support.

The Home Secretary also conveyed a message of greeting and congratulation from the Prime Minister.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, who presided over the dinner, replied for the Council. He expressed the Council's gratitude to the Home Secretary for his speech; to the Lord Mayor for allowing the dinner to be held in the Mansion House; to the anonymous donor whose generosity enabled the dinner to be held; and also to *The Times* for its leading article on the Council's work.

The Archbishop had received a message from the American Ambassador, who was prevented from being present. The Ambassador had written: "On the occasion of the Tenth Anniversary Dinner of the Council of Christians and Jews, which I greatly regret I am unable to attend, I wish to extend my greetings and best wishes. The Council, a tangible expression of the great virtue of tolerance, has made notable contributions to religious understanding. I am confident that it will do so increasingly in the years to come." Dr. Fisher referred also to the absence through illness of Sir Robert Waley Cohen, who had been Treasurer of the Council since its formation, and who had given much labour and toil and energy and enthusiasm to it.

A united spirit

The Archbishop paid tribute to those of the originators of the Council who had since died—William Temple, Archbishop of Canterbury; Dr. Hertz, Chief Rabbi; Cardinal Hinsley; and the Rev. Henry Carter. All were great men who had the passions and sufferings of mankind deeply in their hearts. It was their initiative that brought the Council into being. They had gone, but the united spirit remained, and the present Joint Presidents of the Council, with the Churches that they led, all stood on one common front for this cause. Dr. Fisher paid tribute also to the splendid service of the Council's General Secretary, the Rev. W. W. Simpson. He went on to speak of the continuing importance of the Council's work, as reported elsewhere in *Common Ground*.

Sir Robert Waley Cohen was to have proposed the toast of the guests, but owing to his illness his cousin, Lord Cohen, took his place. Lord Cohen explained that he had been given the notes which Sir Robert had prepared before he was taken ill, so "if the voice is the voice of Lionel, the thoughts are really those of Robert."

THE
CEREMONY
OF THE
LOVING CUP



The Lady Mayoress and the Chief Rabbi taking part in the ceremony of the Loving Cup, an ancient feature of City Banquets in which each guest drinks to the health of his fellow-guests from a cup which is passed round the table.

A service to civilisation

He expressed the Council's pleasure that so many men and women, many of them distinguished in the public life of the country, had come to mark this milestone in the progress of work which the Council believed to be of vital concern to the welfare of this country and to civilisation.

It had become clear that though we might multiply indefinitely the resources and the mechanical refinements which surrounded us, there was something whose presence was essential if the advance in the mechanics of civilisation was to advance civilisation. That, as the Home Secretary had said, was toleration. Without toleration we should be faced with the possibility of a return to the jungle. This formidable danger to the existence of a civilised population had not always been as clear as it was to those who had lived through the testing years to which this generation had been subjected. But it had been plain to the few who had founded this Council ten years ago, and had been increasingly brought to their attention as they went on with their work. That was why the Council, in its fundamental purpose of spreading through the nation and beyond an understanding of the principles and practices of true toleration, had gone from strength to strength in the ten years of its existence.

There was another truth for which the Council also stood. This was that the points of agreement between Christian and Jew were far more important than those on which they differed.

Lord Cohen hoped that what the Council's guests had heard of the work would encourage them to take a continued interest in it. On behalf of Sir Robert he announced that he was to be succeeded as Treasurer by Mr. Edmund de Rothschild, who came from a family with great history and tradition; and he hoped that all those present would support the new Treasurer in his task of raising the necessary funds. The Council spent some £7,000 a year on its work, and could with great advantage spend double that amount if the work of the first ten years was to be extended to wider fields.

Lord Cohen also expressed his pleasure at the presence of the Ambassador for Israel, Mr. Eliahu Elath, whom he congratulated on the raising of his Mission from a Legation to an Embassy, and of Viscount Waverley, who was to reply on behalf of the guests, and whom he described as having a record of distinguished service in many fields which was second to that of no man living today.

A call for support

In his response, Lord Waverley congratulated the Council very warmly on what they had achieved during the ten years of their existence, not only directly, but, as the Archbishop had hinted, by their influence and example in other spheres right outside the field of primary activities. The guests would also wish to thank the Council for the opportunity of showing sympathy with the Council's objects, particularly at that time when so much was heard of colour bars and when in various quarters throughout the world racial and religious antagonisms were so rampant. He himself always thought that of all these antagonisms the religious, or so-called religious, were the worst because they were supposed to be sustained by Divine authority. These were strong and compelling reasons for giving all the support for which previous speakers had pleaded, for the preventive work which was being done by the Council.

So ended one of the most memorable occasions in the Council's life. As the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress led the way out of the Egyptian Hall, those members of the Council's staff who were present might have been forgiven an inaudible sigh of relief that it was now all over without any snags having been encountered. Their one regret, shared by many others, was that the limited capacity of the Mansion House had prevented many more friends of the Council from being present. But as they looked back on the evening they, and all those who were present, Council members and guests alike, could not but feel that this was not just a celebration of ten years that was past, but a splendid augury of the years yet to come.

The Feast of Chanukkah

THE HAHAM

This year the Jewish Festival of Chanukkah commences on December 13th. The Festival recalls the rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem following its liberation by the Maccabees. A feature of the Festival is the lighting, on successive nights, of the candles in the Menorah, or eight-branched candelabra.

THERE is a discussion in the Talmud between two rabbinic schools, Beth Shammai and Beth Hillel, about the way in which the Chanukkah lamp (Menorah) should be kindled. Beth Shammai says that all the eight lights should be kindled on the first night of Chanukkah; and one less should be lit on each successive night so that on the eighth night only one single light would be burning. In this way the Menorah would symbolise the weakening of the Syrian invaders, whose power continued to diminish gradually, until they were entirely vanquished by the armies of the Maccabees.

Beth Hillel, on the other hand, contends that on the first night only one single light should be kindled, and one light added each successive night, so that on the last night eight lights would be burning, thereby indicating the growing strength of the spirit of God in the world. And it is Hillel's ruling that has been generally accepted.

In order to comprehend the significance of these two conflicting opinions, we must first of all gain some knowledge of the characters and views of Shammai and Hillel, the founders of these two schools.

Shammai and Hillel lived in the first century C.E. To both of them piety meant the strict observance of the Torah, the written word of God, and the unwritten teachings of its authoritative interpreters. In the application of the Law, however, Shammai stood for extreme rigorism. He demanded of his son, though still a child, that he should fast on the Day of Atonement. When his grandson was born, during the Feast of Tabernacles, he had the roof opened so that the infant might fulfil the religious obligations of that Festival. Hillel was on the whole more tolerant, and did all he could not to impose upon the people regulations which they might have found too difficult to fulfil.

Shammai was born in the land of Israel and was more nationalistic in his views, while Hillel, on the other hand, was a native of Babylonia, and his views transcended the narrow limits of nationalism. His ideal was that every man should be the disciple of Aaron and a lover of mankind.

The characteristics of these two great masters in Israel were transmitted to the students at their schools. Beth Hillel students, like their

founder, were quiet, peace-loving men, accommodating themselves to circumstances and to the times, their great aim being to bring not only Israel but all men nearer to God and to each other. This was also reflected in their public life, and even during the fatal years which preceded the second destruction of the Temple, they preached and practised peacefulness, gentleness and a spirit of conciliation. Beth Shammai students, however, were severe in their ways and stern in their outlook. They were also intensely patriotic and would not bow to or compromise with the Roman rule. Like their teacher, they saw in the defeat of the enemy and the brilliant victory of the Maccabees the triumph of God's might and the vindication of the Torah as the philosophy of life of the Jewish people. For them Chanukkah commemorated in the first place the downfall of the Syrians, and it was this defeat that had to find full expression in the Menorah. Hence, says the school of Shammai, on each successive Chanukkah night the number of lights kindled should be decreased by one, thereby demonstrating to the world the vanquishing of the enemies of the House of Israel.

Message of Chanukkah for all nations

For Hillel, on the other hand, the defeat of the enemy was a great event primarily because it promoted the spirit of God among the nations and enhanced His beneficent influence among all His creatures. For him the downfall of the Syrian armies was not an end in itself, but only a means whereby the infinite power and mercy of God were manifested before the eyes of all men. The Maccabean victory was valueless unless it fostered among the children of Israel zealotry for the fulfilment of the tasks implicit in the Torah and made them conscious of their duties to God and to their fellow-men. The victory of the Maccabees would become immortal only if it were considered from a point of view which was not limited by narrow national interests and ambitions. The defeat of the Syrians would become a Divine miracle only if it inspired every individual Jew with the determination to make the God of Israel the God of all humanity, to make the Torah the precious possession of all the nations, to make the land of Israel the ideal land of all mankind, and Israel the ideal nation for all men. Otherwise the victory of the Maccabees would eventually be turned into defeat.

The question of which of these two conceptions of victory and defeat, over which Hillel and Shammai differed, will prevail in the world is as important today as it was in the days of those two outstanding scholars in Israel. The Jewish people have almost universally accepted Hillel's ruling concerning the Chanukkah lamp, and have thereby identified

themselves with his interpretation of victory. In spite of the manifold tragedies throughout their history, they have adhered to Hillel's optimism regarding the final triumph of universal brotherhood. They have always maintained that, almost as significant as the Maccabean victory, was Mattathias's battle cry: "Whosoever is zealous of the Law and maintaineth the Covenant, let him follow me!"—(*I. Macabees*, 2, 27).

Christmas all the year round

THE BISHOP OF STEPNEY

More than any other season in the Christian year, Christmas has become a family festival. Even where its religious significance is forgotten, it is still observed as a period of rejoicing and goodwill. In this article the Bishop of Stepney emphasises that for the Christian, Christmas has a special message for the family that is not limited to one season in the calendar.

THE toy fairs are in full swing, the shops are gaily decorated, greeting cards are as pretty as ever (though the purchase tax sends the prices soaring) and we are reminded that there are just so many shopping days before Christmas. Christians might also be reminded that there are just as many days left to prepare themselves for the Festival of the Nativity so that when December 25th dawns they may be ready for the coming of the Christ-child.

There are still many houses and communities which bear on their entrances the notice: "No room," or "No accommodation." They are so occupied with man's multifarious materialistic interests that they cannot be bothered with a baby in the place. After all even the most ordinary of babies (though no baby is ever ordinary) has a way of turning the house upside down, so that the hard-bitten business tycoon is quite ready to act the bear in the hearthrug when he gets home, and gladly forgets all about the Stock Exchange Bears and Bulls for the rest of the evening.

How much more so when the baby who takes up residence is the Lord from Heaven. Very many of the things that matter to us are unimportant to the Holy Child. Our quest for power, our search for riches, our selfish interests look rather silly beside His simplicity—and an insistent question mark obtrudes itself into all our activities. Why do we live as we do? Whence did we get our astonishing standards? Are we really on the right road?

To answer that we have only to look at the figures for divorce and judicial separation, remembering that families that have gone to law represent only a small fraction of the homes that have ceased to be homes, of families that hang together publicly only for social or economic considerations. Contrast this sad truth with the pictures of the Holy Family that artists have always sought to paint, the tranquility, the simple happiness that they all portray. Every home in our land needs to re-discover Christmas with the reconciling presence of the Babe of Bethlehem.

The Jewish family life into which Jesus was born

It is to be noted that Jesus was born into a Jewish home, and Jewish family life still remains a shining example to the rest of humanity. The father naturally offers his homage and worship with that of his wife and children to Almighty God and the family finds its meaning and significance in Him. Gentiles who have been privileged to witness a Jewish home at worship at the start of the Sabbath on a Friday evening can never forget this family solidarity. How natural then that for Christians the Christ-child should turn a household into a home and integrate its members in the service and love of God. How natural, but alas, how unusual !

Nothing can be more important than that from time to time we should have our lives thus challenged, that we should be forced to ask ourselves whether life is turning out to be all we had hoped and expected, whether our homes are all we pledged them to be on our wedding day. None of us is so hardened that we do not think the Spirit of Christmas is the world's greatest need. And surely that spirit should not be limited to Christmas and the few surrounding days. Perhaps we have no right to expect more from the world, but we have every right to expect more from the faithful because they know what it is to have Christmas all the year round.

Christmas throughout the year

Every day the miracle of the Incarnation is recalled; every day we worship before the the infinite condescension of One Whose name is Emmanuel, God-with-us: every day we say " Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldest come under my roof " and as we open our hearts and wills to Him, He comes to us every day as He came long ago to the stable at Bethlehem.

This may be A.D. 1952 but we do not have to look back nearly two thousand years for the coming of the Christ. Since that first Christmas Day He has never ceased to come to His people, and no day passes but if we have ears to hear we may listen to the Angels' message: " Unto you is born this day a Saviour which is Christ the Lord."

Let us then use the days that remain before the Christmas Festival to make ready for the coming of the Christ. And let us not keep the Feast as an isolated event in the Christian year but rather as the centre and inspiration of all our living. Would our homes, our work, our place of worship be in any way different if we kept Christmas all the year round? We all have seen the annual miracle when for a few days discontented faces lose their frowns, disagreeable voices lose their whines or their gruffness, and disappointed people find a happiness beyond reason. Are those frowns and grumbles to be back again in full strength by January 1 or 2? God forbid. The Christ who comes to Bethlehem on Christmas Day comes to London and to Birmingham on December 26 or 27, on January 1 or 2 and indeed on every day of the year.

We look up too seldom—for when we do we see His star still shining in the East, and we are constrained forthwith to go and worship Him. Perhaps we ought not to limit the Christmas hymns and carols to this season. “O come, all ye faithful—come and adore Him” is as much an invitation for midsummer as for midwinter. The world will find no rest till it has answered the call: “O come let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.” And we who know where we may find Him must give the lead.

Commentary

● Dr. Chaim Weizmann, First President of Israel

Outstanding as Dr. Weizmann was in his generation and among Jews, he was nevertheless typical of the Jews of Russian origin born under the Tsarist regime and knew from personal experience the life of the Jewish masses of Eastern Europe, spoke their language, bore their sufferings, and shared their dreams. He was among those who because of the anti-Jewish restrictions in Russia were compelled to seek their further education in West European universities. Chaim Weizmann never forgot his background and though when he came to England he soon found himself completely at home in his new environment, he had always before him the memory of millions of Jews who were striving to secure at least a place of their own where they could live and work in peace and freedom from fear. His love for Britain and her people became a marked feature of his character. His services to this country as a scientist during the first World War are well known. One of his sons was killed during the last war serving in the R.A.F.

The outstanding achievement of the early part of his career was the Balfour Declaration, which he regarded as a basis upon which a permanent partnership between Britain and the Jewish people could be

built, leading to the establishment of a Jewish State in Palestine. The last years of the Mandate when this partnership was subjected to the severest strain must have been amongst the unhappiest periods of his life. The restoration of amicable ties between Britain and Israel must conversely have lightened the burdens and cares of his great office as first President of Israel.

In addition to high qualities of leadership and intellectual distinction he possessed also those indefinable traits which charm and attract. In the pursuit of his ultimate aim, he faced disappointments and set-backs which would have made a lesser man give up in despair, but he possessed not only invincible faith, but the attributes of statesmanship, patience, and far-sighted vision which eventually brought reality to his dream. Few people could have closed their eyes with a greater feeling of thankfulness for a lifelong task fulfilled.

● Self-help by refugees

Another body which has recently celebrated its tenth anniversary is the Association of Jewish Refugees in Great Britain. The occasion was marked by the publication of a booklet—a kind of junior *Festschrift*, entitled "Britain's New Citizens."* The editors of this quite fascinating collection of brief essays resisted the temptation to tell the story of the organisation itself. Instead they have given us a brief survey of the general position of those men and women who came to this country as refugees from Nazi oppression, of their problems, and of the significant and valuable contributions they have made to so many departments of our national life. A glance at the index is sufficient to show just how varied that contribution has been, and indeed still is, in trade and industry, in the natural and social sciences, in mathematics, in music, in stage and film, and in many other ways.

These "new citizens" of ours have had their difficulties, of course. They have often been a problem to themselves as well as to other people. Not all have been successful in their various occupations. In some cases the process of assimilation is still far from complete. It was, in fact, to help in dealing with these problems that the Association of Jewish Refugees was originally set up.

We welcome this opportunity of congratulating them on their tenth anniversary, of wishing them well in the continuance of their valuable and important work, of commending their booklet to, we hope, a wide circle of readers, and of thanking them sincerely for a very gracious reference to this Council which we noted in their pages.

*Obtainable from the headquarters of the Association, 8 Fairfax Mansions, N.W.3., price 2s. 6d.

● A Chanukkah broadcast

We understand that on Saturday December 13th a Channukah play is to be broadcast on the Home Service, in "Children's Hour." The script, which has been written by Hallam Tennyson and Charles Spencer, is intended to give non-Jewish listeners, adults as well as children, an insight into the observance of Chanukkah, and its underlying significance. We welcome this move on the part of the B.B.C., and we hope that the Chanukkah play may be followed by many more, based on the major festivals of other religious faiths. By such means our knowledge and understanding of groups other than our own can be greatly increased.

● The Ambassador of Israel

When Mr. Eliahu Elath drove to Buckingham Palace on October 21st to present his credentials as the first Ambassador of Israel to the Court of St. James he was, as he himself expressed it, completing "the long road that started on November 2nd 1917" with the publication of the Balfour Declaration.

It has not always been an easy road and the fact that such remarkable progress has been made in the establishment of mutual respect and co-operation between this country and Israel in so short a time is due in no small measure to the splendid work of those who have represented the interests of their respective governments in each other's country.

To Mr. Elath, who since his arrival in London two and a half years ago, so shortly after the tragic death of his distinguished predecessor, Dr. Mordecai Eliash, has won for himself so sure a place in the esteem and admiration of all who have come to know him, we offer our sincere congratulations, and our best wishes for his long continuance in his high and important office.

About Ourselves

AS was announced at the Council's Tenth Anniversary Dinner on October 8th, Sir Robert Waley Cohen, K.B.E., is retiring from the Honorary Treasurership of the Council, and his place is being taken by Mr. Edmund de Rothschild, T.D. *Common Ground* wishes to associate itself with the tribute which the Archbishop of Canterbury paid to Sir Robert for his enthusiastic service to the Council since its formation—a service by no means limited to the usual duties of a treasurer. Sir Robert's wise counsel has helped the Council surmount many difficulties, and his

insistence on the importance of long-range objectives has been an important factor in the broadening conception of the Council's educational task. As Treasurer he has been indefatigable, and even after his serious illness a year ago he has continued to give unstinted service to the Council. We hope that he may make a speedy and full recovery from the further illness which so unfortunately prevented him from being present at the Mansion House Dinner.

To the new Treasurer, Mr. Edmund de Rothschild, *Common Ground* extends a warm welcome and the assurance of our fullest co-operation. We know that he regards the work of the Council as of the greatest importance, and we hope that his association with it will be a long and happy one.

● A very distinguished company gathered at the Manchester Reform Club on Tuesday, November 18th for the second annual dinner of the Manchester Council of Christians and Jews. The function was presided over by the Dean of Manchester, the Rt. Rev. John L. Wilson, who, as Chairman of the local Council's Executive Committee, delighted everybody with the announcement that Her Majesty The Queen had been graciously pleased to grant her Patronage to the Council of Christians and Jews.

The toast of the City of Manchester was proposed by the Bishop of Manchester, the Rt. Rev. W. L. D. Greer, one of the Joint-Presidents, and responded to by the Lord Mayor, who paid tribute to the important contribution made to the life of the community by voluntary organisations and emphasised the great need for the provision of religious and social amenities in new housing estates. He also expressed the pleasure of the whole company at the presence of the Mayor and Mayoress of Salford.

The Chairman of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Ben Pickup, J.P., in proposing the toast of the Council reminded the company of the tragic background of intolerance and persecution against which the Council had emerged, and said that in choosing its weapons for its attack on the evil of intolerance it should remember the importance, not only of education, publications, meetings, discussions and so on, but above all of the

spiritual weapons of faith, hope and love.

Replying for the Council the Dean of St. Paul's emphasised the great need for the promotion of that true tolerance which has nothing in common with indifference or indifferentism; Mr. Basil L. Q. Henriques dwelt on the root causes of delinquency in the tragedy of broken homes and loveless lives; while Mr. Neville Laski outlined the practical needs of the Council for increased support both nationally and locally.

Rabbi Selvin P. Goldberg, in proposing the toast of the guests, voiced the thanks of the company for a series of outstandingly good speeches, while Mr. N. G. Fisher, the Director of Education, in replying for the guests, delighted everyone with his wit and encouraged them by his clear understanding of the Council's aims and his manifest interest in its work.

Altogether a most successful evening.

● The Council's Annual General Meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 10th, at 3.0 p.m. in the York Hall, Caxton Hall, Caxton Street, S.W.1. The theme of the meeting will be "Religious Values in Education," and the speakers will be the Very Rev. the Chief Rabbi, the Rt. Hon. Lord Pakenham, and Canon C. E. Raven. The Archbishop of Canterbury will preside over the meeting.

We hope that as many readers of *Common Ground* as possible will attend this meeting.

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS NUMBER

The Bishop of Stepney, the Rt. Rev. Joost de Blank, was formerly Vicar of Greenhill, Harrow. He has been Assistant General Secretary of the Student Christian Movement. He is a member of the Executive Committee of the Council of Christians and Jews.

The Haham, the Very Rev. Dr. S. Gaon, is Chief Rabbi of the Spanish and Portuguese Jewish community, the Sephardim. He is a member of the Executive Committee of the Council of Christians and Jews.

Signed articles express the views of the contributors which are not necessarily those of the Council of Christians and Jews.

● The Hampstead Council of Christians and Jews has planned a most useful series of meetings through the winter. Beginning with what is now an annual public meeting on Remembrance Sunday, November 9th, at which Mr. Frank Byers was the principal speaker, it goes on to four meetings under the general title of "Faith and Worship." Clergy of different denominations—Anglican, Roman Catholic, Free Church and Jewish—will explain their own faith and worship. Besides being informative, these four evenings will provide opportunities for the members and friends of the Hampstead branch to meet and talk together—and that is by no means the least important contribution which they can make to the furtherance of understanding.

● The Thirty-Sixth Annual Conference of Educational Associations is to be held at King's College, Strand, from December 29th, 1952 to January 6th, 1953. The subject chosen for discussion is "Moral Values and Social Progress." As last year the Council of Christians and Jews has been allotted an open meeting and this will take place on Thursday, January 1st, at 4.45 p.m. The speaker will be Canon V. A. Demant, D.Litt., who will speak on "Biblical Insights in our Western Culture." Professor J. S. Lauwerys, D.Sc., will be in the chair. The meeting should be of especial interest to readers of *Common Ground* and it is hoped that they will support it by their presence in large numbers.

Book Notes

Moral Foundations of Citizenship.

*Edited by M. Alderton Pink.
(University of London Press, 8s. 6d.)*

The Association for Education in Citizenship is to be congratulated on having compiled this valuable symposium. It consists of a series of essays by experienced teachers and social workers, all tackling from their different aspects the central problem of modern education, namely, how to train the young in the art of citizenship in a world where traditional sanctions no longer carry authority. Yet, as Sir Arthur Salter says in his foreword, they are far from constituting a joint statement of agreed policy. Rather they

express the thoughts and doubts of those who are actively engaged in solving the problem and as such provide a solid contribution to the discussions which must precede any formulation of policy.

In a sense this is a disturbing book. Inevitably there is a clash of opinion on such questions as the amount of discipline that should be applied in a school or at home, or whether morality can be taught without religion. But even more serious issues confront the reader. One contributor states that "in these days, when the technique of mass communication is so highly developed and so fully exploited for the purposes of propaganda and popular entertainment and culture, it would seem that the all-persuasive

pressure of the total social environment is more powerful in its effects than formal education." If this is true then what can the schools do to ensure that the next generation grows up with the ability to form independent and enlightened judgments based on fundamental moral concepts? We live in a liberal democracy which "must positively encourage the diversity and variety of human achievement." We cannot, as Plato suggested, indoctrinate youth through a rigid code of moral principles, still less condition their behaviour in the manner of modern totalitarian states. We have the far more searching task of providing conditions where helpful social attitudes will take natural root and the same enthusiasm may grow up for the principles of toleration and unselfish service as can so easily be fostered in the case of narrower and more primitive loyalties.

The problem is not solved in this book, but the reader may take heart from the complete unanimity of aim expressed by a group of writers who differ so profoundly in the methods they advocate. Whatever type of education is being treated, whether at the public school or village school, the youth club, the approved school, or "Outward Bound," there is the same recognition of each individual's sacred right to be given the opportunity of full personal development. For each one of us is the "unrepeatable experiment of God." But the overriding task of education is to ensure that such free development contributes to the welfare of society as a whole.

Moral Principles :

An Outline for Social Workers

Published for the Central Churches Group by the National Council of Social Service, 2s. 6d.

The authors of this little booklet have set themselves a task of exceptional difficulty. According to the introduction their aim was to find a moral basis for social behaviour without appealing to the authority of revealed religion. But being representatives of the Christian and Jewish communities, they inevitably from time to time invoke divine sanctions and except in the last section of the chapter on marriage, they scarcely face up to the

fact that a "pure rationalist may live according to a more rigid and exacting moral code than is exhibited by many believers in supernatural religion." (*Moral Foundations of Citizenship*, page 26).

Nevertheless this is a book of great value. It contains excellent advice to parents and social workers on how to influence young people who are faced with moral problems. It preserves a good level of commonsense and is refreshingly free both from dogmatism and any kind of crankiness. Yet it speaks with complete frankness on such controversial subjects as the object of punishment and whether the end justifies the means. And where the authors are not in agreement (as in regard to the use of contraceptives), two opposing opinions are set side by side so that the reader may form his own judgment.

Reviews of other books received will be included in the next issue of "Common Ground."

JACQUES HEIM



**Craven 'A' for smooth,
clean smoking**

e
g
,
,
t
o
d
a
s
n
t
h
f
d
e
n
,
y
n

e
n



